

Message Text

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PAGE 01 USUN N 00606 01 OF 04 220208Z
ACTION IO-14

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C O N F I D E N T I A L SECTION 01 OF 04 USUN NEW YORK 00606

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PAGE 02 USUN N 00606 01 OF 04 220208Z

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HAGUE, TOKYO, VIENNA, WELLINGTON

E. O. 11652: GDS

TAGS: EGEN, UN, ECOSOC

SUBJECT: OVERVIEW MECHANISM (COMMITTEE OF THE WHOLE ESTABLISHED UNDER UNGA RESOLUTION 32/174): ORGANIZATIONAL SESSION CONCLUDES ON POSITIVE NOTE

REF: USUN 557

1. SUMMARY: ORGANIZATION MEETING OF UN OVERVIEW COMMITTEE CONCLUDES ON COOPERATIVE NOTE AFTER SETTING SCHEDULE OF SUBSTANTIVE MEETINGS FOR 1978 AND AGENDA FOR FIRST MEETING. U. S. OBJECTIVES LARGELY MET. END SUMMARY.

2. THE ORGANIZATIONAL MEETING OF THE UNITED NATIONS COMMITTEE OF THE WHOLE WHICH WILL OVERSEE AND MONITOR THE NORTH/SOUTH DIALOGUE CONCLUDED IN A FORMAL SESSION THE EVENING OF FEBRUARY 17. AFTER SEVERAL DAYS OF INFORMAL MEETINGS OF THE COMMITTEE, AS WELL AS MANY MEETINGS AND CAUCUSES OF SMALLER GROUPS, THE DELEGATES HAMMERED OUT A SCHEDULE OF SUBSTANTIVE MEETINGS AND AN AGENDA FOR THE FIRST MEETING. IT ALSO ESTABLISHED AN INDICATIVE AGENDA FOR A SECOND MEETING THIS YEAR ON WHICH THE U. S., EC, AND CANADA EXPRESSED RESERVATIONS. THROUGHOUT THE NEGOTIATING PROCESS G-77 LEADERS, CANADA, EC, JAPAN, U. S., AND CHAIRMAN JAZAIRI OF ALGERIA DEMONSTRATED COOPERATIVE SPIRIT. THE SOVIET UNION DID NOT PLAY AN ACTIVE ROLE IN THE EFFORTS TO ARRIVE AT GENERALLY ACCEPTABLE POSITIONS, BUT IT CONSUMED
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PAGE 03 USUN N 00606 01 OF 04 220208Z

CONSIDERABLE TIME OF THE COMMITTEE IN REPETITIVE DISCOURSES ON VARIOUS PROCEDURAL ISSUES.

3. THE FIRST SUBSTANTIVE MEETING WILL BE HELD AT THE UN MAY 3-12. THE SECOND MEETING WILL BE BETWEEN JUNE 21 AND 30 WITH THE PRECISE DATES TO BE ESTABLISHED AT THE FIRST MEETING. A THIRD SHORT MEETING TO PREPARE A REPORT FOR THE 33RD UNGA WILL BE CONVENED IN SEPTEMBER.

4. THE AGENDA FOR THE MAY MEETING IS:

(1) REVIEW AND ASSESSMENT OF PRINCIPAL FACTORS AFFECTING THE WORLD ECONOMY AND IN PARTICULAR THE ECONOMIES OF THE DEVELOPING COUNTRIES WITH SPECIAL REFERENCE TO THE RELATIONSHIPS BETWEEN THE ECONOMIES OF THE DEVELOPING AND OF THE DEVELOPED COUNTRIES, WITH PARTICULAR REGARD TO THE DEVELOPMENT PROBLEMS OF THE DEVELOPING COUNTRIES.

(2) TRANSFER OF RESOURCES IN REAL TERMS TO THE DEVELOPING COUNTRIES.

(3) OVERSEEING AND MONITORING THE IMPLEMENTATION OF DECI-

SIONS AND AGREEMENTS REACHED IN THE NEGOTIATIONS ON THE
ESTABLISHMENT OF THE NEW INTERNATIONAL ECONOMIC ORDER IN
THE APPROPRIATE BODIES OF THE UNITED NATIONS SYSTEM.

(4) CONTRIBUTION OF THE COMMITTEE IN THE IMPLEMENTATION OF
PARAGRAPHS 4(B) AND (C) OF RESOLUTION 32/174 IN WHICH THE
COMMITTEE IS REQUESTED TO;

(A) PROVIDE IMPETUS FOR RESOLVING DIFFICULTIES IN NEGOTIA-
TIONS AND FOR ENCOURAGING THE CONTINUING WORK IN THESE
BODIES;

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PAGE 01 USUN N 00606 02 OF 04 220230Z
ACTION IO-14

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C O N F I D E N T I A L SECTION 02 OF 04 USUN NEW YORK 00606

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PAGE 02 USUN N 00606 02 OF 04 220230Z

(B) SERVE, WHERE APPROPRIATE, AS A FORUM FOR FACILITATING
AND EXPEDITING AGREEMENT ON THE RESOLUTION OF OUTSTANDING
ISSUES;

(5) AGENDA AND PREPARATION OF THE NEXT SESSIONS.

5. REFERRING TO ITEM 3 IN THE AGENDA, THE U. S. NOTED IN AN
INFORMAL MEETING OF THE COMMITTEE THAT ITS RESERVATIONS ON
THE NIEO WERE WELL KNOWN.

6. EFFORTS BY THE G-77 TO INCLUDE A REFERENCE TO MONETARY
REFORM IN ITEM 2 WERE BEATEN BACK BY THE U. S. AND EC, AS
WERE G-77 ATTEMPTS TO INCLUDE UNDER ITEM 1 TWO SUB-ITEMS ON
TRADE:

-- INCREASE IN EXPORT EARNINGS OF DEVELOPING COUNTRIES AND
IMPROVEMENT OF THEIR TERMS OF TRADE; PROTECTION OF THE PUR-
CHASING POWER OF DEVELOPING COUNTRIES.

-- PROTECTIONIST MEASURES BY DEVELOPED COUNTRIES AGAINST
THE EXPORTS OF DEVELOPING COUNTRIES.

7. THE PROPOSED AGENDA FOR THE SECOND SUBSTANTIVE MEETING
OF THE COMMITTEE IS:

(1) MEASURES REGARDING WORLD FOOD PROBLEMS AND AGRICULTURAL
DEVELOPMENT.

(2) THE LIMA DECLARATION AND PLAN OF ACTION AND THE
STRENGTHENING OF THE INDUSTRIAL CAPACITY OF DEVELOPING
COUNTRIES.

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PAGE 03 USUN N 00606 02 OF 04 220230Z

(3) RESOLUTION OF THE SPECIAL AND PRESSING PROBLEMS OF THE
LEAST DEVELOPED, LANDLOCKED, AND ISLAND DEVELOPING COUNTRIES
AND THE MOST SERIOUSLY AFFECTED COUNTRIES, TAKING INTO AC-
COUNT THE DECISIONS AND RESOLUTIONS OF THE UNITED NA-

TIONS.

FOLLOWED BY ITEMS (3), (4), AND (5) OF THE AGENDA OF THE FIRST SESSION.

8. THIS PROPOSED AGENDA WILL BE REFINED AT THE FIRST SUBSTANTIVE MEETING. THE U. S., EC, AND CANADA OBJECTED TO THE EXPLICIT REFERENCE TO THE LIMA DECLARATION AND PLAN OF ACTION INASMUCH AS IT WAS A UN RESOLUTION TO WHICH NOT ALL COUNTRIES HAD SUBSCRIBED. THEY DID NOT MAKE A MAJOR EFFORT TO HAVE THE REFERENCE DELETED BECAUSE, AS THEY NOTED, THIS AGENDA WAS MERELY INDICATIVE AND COULD BE MODIFIED AT THE MAY MEETING.

9. ALSO TO BE CONSIDERED AT THE FIRST MEETING WILL BE THE ISSUE OF WHETHER OR NOT SPECIAL MEETINGS OF THE COMMITTEE COULD BE CALLED TO DEAL WITH CRISES. IT IS CLEAR THAT BY CRISES THE G-77 MEANS DEVELOPMENTS SUCH AS FAILURE TO BREAK THE DEADLOCK IN THE UNCTAD NEGOTIATIONS FOR A COMMON FUND FOR BUFFER STOCK FINANCING OR FAILURE TO REACH A SOLUTION TO THE LDC DEBT ISSUE SATISFACTORY TO THE G-77. THE DEVELOPED COUNTRIES ARE CONCERNED THAT, IF THE COMMITTEE COULD CALL SUCH SPECIAL MEETINGS, IT WOULD ALLOW THE COMMITTEE IN FACT TO PRE-EMPT NEGOTIATIONS TAKING PLACE IN OTHER FORA, LEAD TO FREQUENT OR VIRTUALLY CONSTANT MEETINGS OF THE COMMITTEE FOR WHICH PREPARATIONS WOULD BE INADEQUATE, REDUCE THE INCENTIVES FOR NEGOTIATORS IN OTHER FORA TO WORK OUT SOLUTIONS AND INHIBIT THE COMMITTEE'S CAPACITY TO TAKE A FRESH LOOK AT GLOBAL ECONOMIC ISSUES. FURTHERMORE, SUCH "CRISES" CAN BE DEALT WITH WITHIN THE MANDATE OF THE COMMITTEE AT ITS REGULAR MEETINGS UNDER ITEM 4 OF THE AGENDA.

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PAGE 01 USUN N 00606 03 OF 04 220244Z

ACTION IO-14

INFO OCT-01 AF-10 ARA-10 EUR-12 EA-10 NEA-10 ISO-00

CIAE-00 DODE-00 PM-05 H-01 INR-10 L-03 NSAE-00

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C O N F I D E N T I A L SECTION 03 OF 04 USUN NEW YORK 00606

BRUSSELS FOR USEEC, PARIS FOR USOECD
CONFIDENTIAL

CONFIDENTIAL

PAGE 02 USUN N 00606 03 OF 04 220244Z

10. IN ORDER TO ASSURE THAT THERE IS ADEQUATE TIME FOR DISCUSSION OF ALL AGENDA ITEMS, THE CHAIRMAN HAS REQUESTED THAT FORMAL STATEMENTS ON AGENDA ITEM 1 NOT BE MADE AT THE FIRST MEETING. RATHER WRITTEN STATEMENTS (NOT LONGER THAN NORMAL ORAL STATEMENTS) MAY BE SUBMITTED TO THE COMMITTEE BY APRIL 7. THE MEETING WILL OPEN WITH DISCUSSION BASED ON THOSE PAPERS.

11. COUNTRIES MAY SUBMIT TO THE COMMITTEE BY MARCH 15 SUGGESTIONS AS TO ISSUES (IN FORM OF SUB-PARAGRAPHS) WHICH MIGHT BE RAISED UNDER ITEM 2.

12. AT THE REQUEST OF SPAIN THE RAPPORTEUR'S REPORT ON THE ORGANIZATIONAL MEETING WILL INCLUDE EXPLICIT MENTION THAT THE COMMITTEE CHAIRMANSHIP WILL BE ROTATED IN 1979 AND 1980. CHAIRMAN JAZAIRI GAVE PRIVATE ASSURANCES TO THIS EFFECT TO U. S. DELEGATE HORMATS.

13. COMMENT:
THE ORGANIZATIONAL MEETING OF THE COMMITTEE OF THE WHOLE WAS GENERALLY SATISFACTORY TO THE U. S. VIRTUALLY ALL OF OUR MAJOR OBJECTIVES WERE ACHIEVED:

A. WE OBTAINED CLEAR COMMITMENTS FROM THE CHAIRMAN AND THE G-77 TO THE PRINCIPLE OF ROTATION OF THE CHAIRMANSHIP ON AN ANNUAL BASIS.

B. WE OBTAINED FORMAL ASSURANCES FROM THE G-77 THAT THE COMMITTEE WILL NOT PRE-EMPT OR INTERFERE WITH NEGOTIATIONS TAKING PLACE IN OTHER FORUMS. (WE WILL HAVE TO WATCH THIS CAREFULLY, HOWEVER, BECAUSE THE PRESSURES ON THE G-77 TO BRING ISSUES TO THE COMMITTEE FOR CONCRETE RESULTS COULD
CONFIDENTIAL

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PAGE 03 USUN N 00606 03 OF 04 220244Z

LEAD TO ACTIVITIES BY THE COMMITTEE TANTAMOUNT TO NEGOTIATIONS.)

C. THERE IS AN UNDERSTANDING THAT THE COMMITTEE WILL REACH POSITIONS BY CONSENSUS RATHER THAN BY RESOLUTIONS. (WITH ITS MAJORITY POSITION, THE G-77 COULD, IN THE ABSENCE OF THIS UNDERSTANDING, JAM THROUGH ANY RESOLUTION IT WANTS.)

D. NO LONG RANGE SCHEDULE OF MEETINGS OR WORK PROGRAM WAS ESTABLISHED. EACH MEETING IN EFFECT WILL DETERMINE THE DURATION AND AGENDA FOR THE NEXT ONE. FLEXIBILITY HAS BEEN MAXIMIZED.

E. THE AGENDA FOR THE FIRST MEETING CONFORMS TO THE U. S. VIEW THAT IT SHOULD CONSIST OF GENERAL, NEUTRALLY WORDED TOPICS UNDER WHICH COUNTRIES MAY BRING UP A VARIETY OF SPECIFIC ISSUES OF CONCERN TO THEM.

F. THE FIRST MEETING WILL BEGIN WITH THE GENERAL ANALYTICAL DISCUSSION OF THE GLOBAL ECONOMY WHICH WE ADVOCATED. THEN IT WILL MOVE TO DISCUSSION OF A MORE SPECIFIC TOPIC (RESOURCE TRANSFERS) WHICH WAS OUR FIRST CHOICE.

G. SUBJECTS WHICH WOULD HAVE BEEN DIFFICULT FOR US, E.G. MONETARY REFORM AND THE G-77'S TRADE ISSUES, DO NOT APPEAR ON THE FIRST AGENDA OR THE PROPOSED AGENDA FOR THE SECOND MEETING. (THEY MAY COME UP ANYWAY, OF COURSE.)

H. THE NUMBER OF MEETINGS FOR 1978 IS ACCEPTABLE TO US AND BETTER THAN WE HAD EXPECTED. THE MEETINGS ARE A FEW DAYS LONGER THAN WE WANTED, BUT PROBABLY ARE MANAGEABLE. THE TIMING OF THE MEETINGS ALSO IS ACCEPTABLE.

I. G-77 REFERENCES TO A MINISTERIAL LEVEL MEETING IN SEPTEMBER HAVE BEEN DROPPED.

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PAGE 01 USUN N 00606 04 OF 04 220247Z
ACTION IO-14

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C O N F I D E N T I A L SECTION 04 OF 04 USUN NEW YORK 00606

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CONFIDENTIAL

PAGE 02 USUN N 00606 04 OF 04 220247Z

J. THE EC COUNTRIES WHICH HAD ADOPTED A WEAK, PASSIVE AT-
TITUDE AT THE OUTSET OF THE MEETING BECAME VERY EFFECTIVE
BY ITS END. THEY CAME TO REALIZE THAT AN ACTIVIST, POSI-

TIVE APPROACH RELATIVELY CLOSE TO THAT OF THE U. S. WOULD ACHIEVE SPECIFIC RESULTS THEY DESIRED WITHOUT BEING PERCEIVED BY THE G-77 AS CONFRONTATIONAL. IN ADDITION, AS THE SCANDINAVIANS BEGAN TO PERCEIVE THAT THE ACTIVIST U. S. APPROACH, COUPLED WITH CLOSE U. S. CONSULTATIONS WITH THE G-77 AND OUR CONSTRUCTIVE ATTITUDE TOWARD THE CONFERENCE, WAS EFFECTIVE AND NOT SEEN AS CONFRONATIONAL BY LDC'S, U. S. AND SCANDINAVIANS WERE ABLE TO WORK CLOSELY ON A NUMBER OF ISSUES. WEO COOPERATION, WHICH WAS A BIT WEAK AT THE OUTSET DUE TO SUSPICIONS OF U. S. MOTIVES AND OUR PREVIOUS ADVOCACY OF A "RESTRICTED GROUP," WAS EXCELLENT AT THE END.

K. THE COMMITTEE HAS GOTTEN OFF TO A COOPERATIVE, POTENTIALLY USEFUL, START, AND THE U. S. IS PERCEIVED AS HAVING PLAYED A MAJOR POSITIVE ROLE IN BRINGING ABOUT THIS OUTCOME.

14. USUN AND DEPARTMENT WOULD APPRECIATE REPORTING ON REACTIONS OF HOST GOVERNMENTS TO THE ORGANIZATION MEETING OF THE COMMITTEE OF THE WHOLE, AS WELL AS ON THEIR VIEWS ON THE OVER-ALL PURPOSES AND USEFULNESS OF THE COMMITTEE AND THEIR PREPARATIONS FOR THE FIRST SUBSTANTIVE MEETING.
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